

REMARKS

The application has been amended to place it in condition for allowance at the time of the next Official Action.

Claims status

Claims 11-20 remain in this application.

35 USC 112, second paragraph rejection

Claims 12, 13 and 19 were rejected under 35 USC 112, second paragraph as being indefinite. That rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claims 12 and 13 are amended to replace the term "second order" with its meaning according to the invention as explained in the description page 4, lines 15-20.

Claim 19 is amended to clarify the term "setback" according to the invention as explained in the description page 8, lines 12-18.

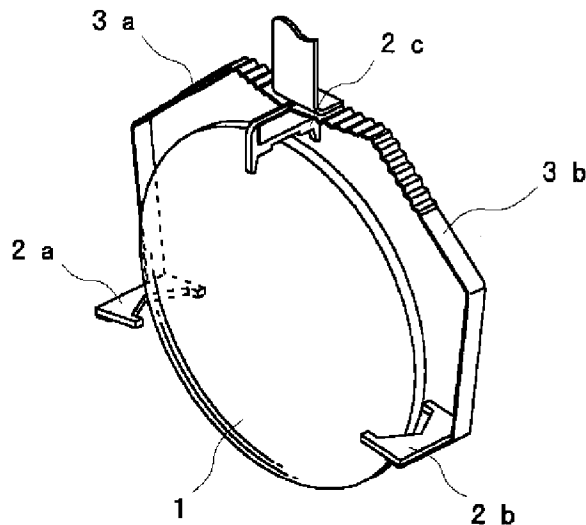
The above changes are believed to address the rejection and withdrawal of the same is respectfully requested.

35 USC 102 rejection

Claims 11, 14-16 and 20 were rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by JP 2001-311914. That rejection is respectfully traversed.

Independent claim 11 is amended to clarify that the hoop is "exerting continuous linear contact with said peripheral edge" (see page 3, lines 19-22) and is provided with drip-tabs "pointing away from the optical element" (see page 3, lines 29-31).

JP '914 discloses, with reference to Figure 2, reproduced below, a support for a lens 1 comprising a hoop 3a, 3b and three support elements 2a, 2b, 2c extending perpendicularly to the hoop 3a, 3b.



JP '914 Figure 2

The lens 1 is supported by these three support elements 2a, 2b, 2c, each of them exerting a contact in a very limited zone of the periphery of the lens. Thus, the hoop described by JP '914 only circles the lens from a distance and is not in contact with the lens at all. It therefore does not exert a continuous linear contact with the lens along its periphery as recited.

Moreover, the support elements point toward the inside of the lens, as clearly shown by the above Figure 2 of JP '914,

and do not play any role in draining, for example, the varnish of the lens. Therefore, they do not form drip-tabs extending away from the lens, as claimed in claim 11.

Therefore, JP '914 does not disclose the present invention as recited in amended independent claim 11.

Accordingly, claim 11 and the claims that depend therefrom are not anticipated by JP '914.

In addition, at least claim 20 is believed to be independently patentable of claim 11.

That is, JP '914 does not disclose either an arc possessing two diametrically opposite striated portions as claimed in claim 20, as JP '914 only discloses an arc possessing one striated zone.

#### 35 USC 103 rejection

Claims 12, 13 and 17-19 were rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over JP '914. That rejection is respectfully traversed.

As set forth above, the presently recited invention is distinguished from JP '914 at least in that the hoop of the ring is in continuous linear contact with the peripheral edge of the lens held by said ring and in that this hoop comprises at each of its two ends an outwardly-directed drip-tab pointing away from the lens.

These characteristics help ensure that the coating layer is deposited on the lens in a uniform manner, and in particular that this coating layer is free from any peripheral zones of extra thickness (see, for example, page 2, lines 30-34).

Theses peripheral zones of extra thickness occur when support elements of the lens similar to those described in JP '914 are in contact with the peripheral edge of the lens over a very small area.

Modification of JP '914 to achieve the claimed invention would not have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, insofar as it would first have required the identification of this technical problem, which is not apparently mentioned in JP '914.

Even if one skilled in the art were to have identified this problem, holding the lens in a hoop with continuous linear contact along the peripheral edge of the lens would not have been considered based on the teachings of JP '914, as it would require elimination of the three support elements of JP '914 that are essential features of the ring disclosed in JP '914.

The technical problem solved by JP '914 concerns holding lenses of different diameters. The three support elements are essential features of the ring disclosed in JP '914 as they are indeed necessary for the ring to receive lenses of different diameters.

The modification of JP '914 teachings to achieve the structure of present invention would therefore change drastically the principle of operation of the ring taught in JP '914 and entail significant structural modifications to eliminate the three support elements and adapt the hoop to the peripheral edge of the lens. Such a modification would not have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art.

Moreover, nothing in JP '914 suggests adding drip-tabs extending away from the lens. As such, the teachings of JP '914 therefore do not result in the inventive solution of the present claims and thus fails to render obvious these claims.

Further, JP '914 does not disclose nor suggest using a hoop with an internal or external section of concave geometry as claimed in claim 19. Thus, claim 19 is believed to be patentable independently of the patentability of claim 11.

In view of the present amendment and the foregoing remarks, it is believed that the present application has been placed in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested.

Should there be any matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any

overpayment to Deposit Account No. 25-0120 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17.

Respectfully submitted,

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